

On February 11, 1887, Stackpole wrote a long article for the Fairbury Blade titled The Illinois Coal Field, As a Factor in the Destiny of Nations.

Within this article, Stackpole claims that back in early 1860, he wrote articles in both Peoria and Chicago newspapers. Unfortunately, the author has been unable to find any of these 1860 newspaper articles. Stackpole's claim about writing the 1860 articles is repeated below.

February 11, 1887 Fairbury Blade
THE ILLINOIS COAL FIELD,
As a Factor in the Destiny of Nations

Early in 1860 the author of this paper advocated in a course of articles in the leading paper in Chicago (and another course in the press of Peoria about the same time) the reduction of the ores of Missouri and Lake Superior, with the coal of Illinois. But, except with a few, the very idea was considered visionary and the belief was quite general that we could make iron with Pennsylvania coal. But now, great furnaces and rolling mills, at St. Louis, Chicago, Grand Tower, Joliet, and other places, have so long wrought out their great results by the use of Illinois coal, results that would rejoice the very soul of Tubel-Cain, and all the metal workers of the past, that it is not necessary to say much as to the quality of coal in this great central field, which is the very citadel of our National power by nature. The great city paper soon after changed owners, and later was greatly enlarged in size, until finally every day's issue came to contain enough to make a good sized book.

But from a solid cord of its files, it would be impossible to find out that the vast resources represented by the Illinois coal field, and the various minerals of the great lake or river regions by which it is almost surrounded, had any existence, that they were to be developed or were undergoing development, or were matters of any interest or importance. And the neglect or betrayal of the most practical things has been quite general in current literature. And while whole hecatombs of our business men have been annually slaughtered, in every line, our inland navigation—so vital to the economic blending and distribution of those resources—has been kept obstructed and disconnected, and financial stability and safety to our greatest interests has not been reached, our foreign commerce has been kept back, dwarfed, emasculated of the vital force of which it gave once such high promise, and now stands as a mere adjunct to British commerce, which fixes the price of nearly all our productions.

The decline of our navigation is almost unparalleled in history. Of nearly sixteen-hundred vessels which touched at the port of Gibraltar in the last quarter of the year 1883, not one carried our flag, not one. And this at the entrance of the Mediterranean, that great historic highway of mankind, from which it was the peculiar and remarkable destiny of our country—in the very childhood of its material power, to sweep away the barbarous piracy which had been permitted there for ages. But we must arouse and break these bands of error that have been placed upon us, and that have ruined so many of our people, and have at times almost paralyzed the healthiest and sounded enterprises and industries at home, and so have dwarfed or destroyed those we might have undertaken abroad. The very earth, over all the world, seems to cry out for relief from robbery, and for the advance of honorable enterprise, and industries, on the sound and true Christian basis of

reciprocal and mutual benefits.